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MARIE ANTOINETTE'S KISS.

Mozart was scarcely three years old when he first placed his little hands upon the keys of the piano-forte, and endeavored to execute a succession of thirds, the only extension which could then be accomplished by his short and plump tiny fingers.

Whenever he succeeded in discovering some harmony, his eyes became animated with delight. At the age of four, he knew by heart the most prominent part of the concertos performed by his sister, and his father composed for him little pieces, which are still in existence.

It was thus that Mozart learned music as a childish pastime, or rather the divine inspiration of music revealed itself in his soul with the first perceptions of his infancy. In 1762, Leopold Mozart, accompanied by his two children, began an artist's pilgrimage through Europe.

The travels of a whole family of musicians going to seek their fortunes in distant countries, were then, and are still, to this day, characteristic of the simple and adventurous manners of the German nation.

Mozart was then hardly six years old. His execution on the piano was already marvellous, and his precocious genius beaming through all he did, seemed to await with impatience the moment when nature would permit him to take possession of the vast empire of musical art.

Leopold Mozart and his two children, went first to Munich, in the month of January, 1762. They returned in delight to Salzburg, after having charmed, during three whole weeks, the court of the Elector of Bavaria, one of the most musical of Germany.

In the autumn of the same year they went to Vienna. This voyage was a real triumph for Wolfgang. He remained four days with the Bishop of Lieutzen, who could hardly bear to part with so extraordinary a child.

The Young Mozart played the organ in a Convent of Franciscans, whose enthusiasm was wound up to the highest degree, and, at the gates of Vienna, he softened the rigor of the custom-house officers by playing a minuet on a little violin which had been presented to him.

Scarcely had they reached the capital of Austria, when every one flocked to hear the infant *virtuoso*. Invitations poured in on all sides, and the most splendid equipages succeeded one another at the poor traveler's door.

The noblest ladies, princes, and noblemen, disputed with each other the honor of having at their table Leopold Mozart's two clever children. All three being admitted at court, the Emperor Francis the First, came as far as the ante-chamber to receive them, and conducted them with kindness into the interior apartments occupied by Maria Theresa, surrounded by her fine and numerous family.

Wolfgang, whom nothing intimidated, was soon seated with infantile grace on the Empress's knee, who ceased not to admire his engaging manners, as well as his extraordinary talent.

In running across the room, his foot slipped on the highly polished *parquet* of the palace, and he fell. The Arch-Duchess, Marie Antoinette, hastened to help him up.

"You are so kind," said Wolfgang to her, "that I should like to marry you."

The princess having related this speech to her mother, Maria Theresa asked the talented child what could have caused him to desire to marry her daughter.

"Gratitude," answered he; "for she alone was kind to me, while her sisters looked on without moving."

A kiss, accompanied with a charming smile, was the reward of the young and lovely princess for the compliment paid her by the precocious child.

Who knows but this kiss, imprinted by the adorable lips of the unfortunate Marie Antoinette, on the snowy forehead of the inspired Mozart, did not then deposit the germ of the beautiful *Donna Anna*. The virgin soul of a child of genius is a deep source, nourished by first impressions, from which spring the charming creations which people the world of fancy.

There is something singular in the questioning about time when on the brink of eternity. With some persons the inquiry is made in serious connexion with some preconceived ideas, as was probably the case with Swedenborg. On the other hand, persons on the threshold between life and death often give expression to idle or cynical queries. Thurtell, with the rope round his throat, begged to be told whether Tom Spring had or had not won the fight of the day before; and there is a story told of Sir Thomas Molesworth that, on the morning of his death, he asked about the time and weather, and, being informed that the latter was excessively hot, he made a remark of a very disagreeable tendency with reference to the effect the heat would have upon his body before the day was out. But all the stories touching the last words of dying men must be taken with extreme caution. A thousand terse phrases have been quoted of men in this condition and of humorous impulse of utterance to which they never gave expression.

Long since has the old traditionary anecdote of Addison's last moments been exploded and blown to fragments or, rather, utter nothingness. He did not send for the young Earl of Warwick to see "how a Christian could die." And it would have been a very impudent thing if he had; for that dying Christian gentleman was in the habit of fuddling himself, and that library gallery of Holland house, where he used to walk to and fro, with a bottle of port wine at either end for his solace under such oscillation, was not exactly a *vía sacra*. On the other hand, some alleged last words have undoubtedly been spoken, and they have been highly characteristic of the utterers. Among them all, there is none more hearty, honest, and charitable than the dying phrase which the dear Sir Joshua caught through his trumpet from Gainsborough's lips, as he hung over the great Suffolk painter: "We are all going to Heaven, and Vandyke is of the party." The essence of the doctrine of the Origen lay in this remark. "All" were going to paradise, friends or foes, rivals, superiors or inferiors; in any case the whole joyous artistic brotherhood; and from such a brilliant and blessed company it was not likely that Gainsborough would have willingly missed his favorite Vandyke.

CLAUDINE.

A haughty maid is the brown-eyed Claudine,
With a look, and a step, and a smile like a queen,
And she sits on her chair, as a queen on her
throne,
With an eye beaming love, but a heart that is
stone.

O'er her breast falls a lock of raven black hair,
That is fondled and toyed by the midsummer air,
As she sits on her chair, as a queen on her
throne,
With an eye beaming love, but a heart that is
stone.

She cares not for lovers, does haughty Claudine,
She laughs at their vows most gaily, I ween,
As she sits on her chair, as a queen on her
throne,
With an eye beaming love, but a heart that is
stone.

Her locks brush my forehead, my lips touch her
cheek,
While a feeling comes o'er me forbidding me
to speak,
Yet I know, as she smiles and calls me her own,
That her eye tells of love, but her heart is of
stone.

I prithee, Claudine, have you thought of the day
When Time with his wrinkles drives beauty away?
Ah, then you will sit deserted, alone,
With your eye that beams love, and your heart
that is stone.

PALETTA.

If the invention of the ship was thought so noble, which carrieth riches and commodities from place to place, and consociateth the most remote regions in participation of their fruits, how much more are letters to be magnified, which as ships pass through the vast seas of time, and make ages so distant participate of the wisdom, illuminations, and inventions, of the one of the other!

BACON.

ITEMS FROM FOREIGN PAPERS.

COPENHAGEN.—The following works were included in the programme of the sixth concert given by the Musical Association, under the direction of Herr Gade:—Schumann's Overture, Scherzo and Finale; Schubert's 23d Psalm; Overture in C major, by Hartmann; and Concerto in E flat major for two pianos, Mozart.

BRUNN.—At the last Philharmonic Concert the programme included the overture to *Egmont*, Beethoven; "Ave verum," Mozart; "Hallelujah," from *The Messiah*, Handel; and Symphony in C major, Schubert.

ST. PETERSBURG.—Litoff lately gave a concert with great applause, but little pecuniary benefit. The days of brilliant receipts are now past in Russia.

MOSCOW.—Herr Nicolaus Rubenstein gave a concert some time since, when the programme comprised the overture to *Genovera*; Concerto in G major, Beethoven; "Totentanz," Franz Liszt; together with works by Mendelssohn, Schumann, Chopin, and Russian composers.

LEIPZIG.—Her Liebig with his orchestra is giving a series of very successful concerts every evening in the Hotel de Pologne.

NUREMBURG.—Herr Niemann has been singing here with great applause.